

#### **EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT**

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Michael Curtis on 5/15/09.

The application has been amended as follows:

Cancel claims 29, 31, and 59.

27. (Currently Amended) A microporous affinity membrane produced according to claim 1, wherein said microporous affinity membrane is a microporous flat sheet membrane substrate made up of a mixture of polyether sulfone and polyvinylpyrrolidone having a wall thickness of 20-200  $\mu$ m and comprises at least one or more functional groups, bound only to pore surfaces and the filtrate side of the microporous affinity membrane.

41. (Currently amended) The process according to claim 14, wherein the housing or casing is concentric in relation to the membrane substrate.

#### **REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE**

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: claims 1-6, 8-10, 12-28, 30, 32-33, 38-58, 60 are allowed over the prior art of record. The prior art of record fails to teach or suggest the process in which the modifying gas is an organic precursor with the claimed functional groups, therefore, claim 1 as whole, and dependent claims are allowed. The modified microporous membrane of claims 55, and 27 combining all the claimed structural limitations, and made by the process (of claim

1), that provides the functional groups bound to the porous surfaces is not disclosed or suggested in the prior art of record. Additional reasons are found in applicant's arguments filed on 2/25/09.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ana M. Fortuna whose telephone number is (571) 272-1141. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:30-6:00 M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David R. Sample can be reached on (571) 272-1376. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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